



# Rockport Millbrook Meadow Committee

Town Hall, Rockport, MA 01966

*Charmaine Blanchard  
Kimberly Jones  
Shannon Mason, Vice Chair  
John Sparks*

*Samuel W. Coulbourn, Chair  
Marcia Lombardo, Treasurer  
Barbara Sparks  
Frederick H. Tarr III*

## **Minutes of Meeting, Wednesday, August 21, 2013, 7:00 p.m. Rockport Police Headquarters Community Room**

**7:05 p.m. Chairman Sam Coulbourn called the meeting to order. Members present: Charmaine Blanchard, Kimberly Jones, Marcia Lombardo, Shannon Mason, Barbara and John Sparks. Ted Tarr was absent.**

### **1. Update Millbrook Meadow Restoration.**

**Pre-bid Conference and Opening of Bids.** John Sparks reported on a very well-attended pre-bid conference that began at Town Hall, and then attendees walked to Millbrook Meadow and were shown areas of interest and concern by John and Joe Parisi, DPW Director. He had copies of bid documents arranged on a table for the committee. Nine companies or groups of companies have submitted bids and he, Sam and Eric Hutchins are examining them now, in order to submit recommendations to DPW.

John has issued a "Progress Report" to interested officials and Rockporters detailing the information above. Shannon will post this on the Town website. Sam will provide an abbreviated version to Friends of the Meadow and Pond by email.

**Plans for supporting CPC Application at Fall Town Meeting.** Members noted misleading article in *Gloucester Daily Times* that suggested that the restoration project would gain \$350,000 which was money from Commonwealth as part of earlier obligation for construction of the Mill Dam. These funds reimburse the Town, and are not intended for the Meadow. Members agreed that we will have to ensure this is clarified before and at Town Meeting. John reported that at Fall Town Meeting our request for CPC funds is Article F.

**Current Maintenance and status of list given to DPW.** Charmaine noted that the playground swings have been repaired, but the depression beneath the swings has not been filled; the Meadow sign at the Beach St. entrance is still not up, the granite on the Founders' Bridge needs repointing, the birch tree near the Stanish-Robinson property has not been hauled away and the park bench at the NW corner of the Pond is still in very poor condition. The bench along the Meadow path has been repaired and repainted. The Chairman said he would send this current list to DPW.

Charmaine mentioned that she had received a complaint from Mary White, who is an organic gardener, that the Rockport Garden Club's (RGC) Knotweed Eradication Program was using poisonous and harmful chemicals to eradicate the invasive plants. Members replied that their use is monitored by Geri Falco of the Rockport Conservation Commission. Ms. White's concerns will be conveyed to Nan Blue and Laura Hallowell of the RGC.

## **2. Plans for Fundraising, publicity, community support:**

**Sub-Committee to Establish Non-Profit (501.c.3) status:** Kimberly volunteers to head this group, which will also include Sam, Marcia, and Charmaine. Kimberly will initiate a meeting to discuss and decide upon elements in 501.c.3 application introduced by Charmaine.

John noted that in his meetings with the Community Preservation Committee it had been emphasized repeatedly that they are uneasy about our seriousness in obtaining grants, as a means of helping to fund restoration of the Meadow.

**Fund-Raising Committee.** Members discussed this, and names of Susan Gray and Betsy Giannoccaro were brought up as two people who could be very helpful. Barbara will contact Betsy, to see if she will be a member or at least a consultant.

**Fund-raising events,** e.g. Selling T-shirts & caps, movie night, benefit concert, kick-ball game, fairs, festivals, antique show, art festival, etc. Members proposed setting up a table at the Harvest Festival October 19<sup>th</sup> and selling t-shirts and advertising about our restoration project. Shannon will obtain permission to set up a table. **Members voted to obligate \$30.00 fee for the table.**

Kimberly suggested that we consider a "Winterfest" next winter. This could include a skating party, bonfire, toasting marshmallows, perhaps music, etc. Members were asked to think about this and consider how it could work.

Suggestion was made that we use the Facebook page to sell t-shirts.

**CACC follow-up.** Shannon reported that Cape Ann Chamber does not provide a service for receiving donations from organizations that do not have tax exemption status (501.c.3), but Essex County Community Foundation (ECCF) may provide this. However, an organization must have its request for 501.c.3 in the works. Charmaine suggested that we move forward to get this. Shannon volunteered to contact ECCF to learn more. Kimberly suggested that we meet with Thacher Island Association and perhaps Debbie Gillis of the Accountant's Office to learn more.



*Marcia and Charmaine man table at Festival*

**Report on Acoustic Festival Aug. 11<sup>th</sup>.** Charmaine reported that the event was well-attended and there was much interest in our table, and we took in \$224 in sales of t-shirts, cards and donations. Shannon provided the visual display, shirts and cards, Charmaine, Marcia, Ted and Sam manned the table, along with Meadow Friend Mark Coulbourn. Festival organizer David Cutler was very

helpful, and had Charmaine come to the stage to use the microphone to tell attendees about the Meadow and our Restoration Project.

**3. Dogs.** Dogs without leashes, signs—discussion. Barbara noted that the Town Bylaw is explicit in requiring dogs to be on leash in the Meadow. No allowance is made for “voice control”. She noted that there is already a sign at the Beach Street entrance advising of the leash requirement. Members decided not to pursue additional measures at this time.

**4. Meadow Event Schedule:**

**Sunday, Oct. 6: 2-4 p.m. Blessing of the Animals by Rev. Karin Wade**

**5. Committee Business:**

**Approve Minutes of July 24<sup>th</sup>** . Minutes were revised to show that dogs are allowed in the Meadow on leash only.

**Bill for T-shirts. Committee voted to pay Shannon \$475** to reimburse money spent for 80 t-shirts. Marcia advised that transactions be handled through her. It gets too confusing if various members are turning in money to the Town treasurer, she said.

1. **New Business.** John briefed members on an Eagle Scout project by Life Scout Sayles Kasten. John will work with him to finalize the scope of his project, which may involve cutting a path in the brush from the NE corner of the Mill Pond toward Union Cemetery, and will include obtaining any Conservation Commission permits.
2. **Set Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at Trustees’ Room, Library.**
3. **Adjourn. 8:55 p.m.**

**Approved:**

**Samuel W. Coulbourn**

**Copy to: Town Administrator  
Director of Public Works  
Nancy Blue and Laura Hallowell, RGC**